8: Lužbetak E-4 (no date) 1951 RHI Caucasia RHI

body-guards of the princes, (3) the nobility, (4) peasants, slaves, and prisoners of war.[110]

The haughtiest nobility of all Caucasia was that of the *Cherkess*.[111] Anyone seeking an example of Medieval feudalism at its height needs but study the reports about the Cherkess of about a hundred years ago. It was only in 1867 that slavery and serfdom were abolished.

But not all Cherkess tribes were equally feudalistic. Thanks especially to the powerful aristocratic merchant class of the coastal tribes (the Shapsugs and Natukhai), feudalism disappeared in extreme western Circassia long before the Russians abolished it elsewhere in the Caucasus.[112] The Kabardians were of course the most feudalistic. "Endless is the list of Kabardian social ranks... They even have a code of laws, the *Adygé-Khabse*, which determines every step of the Kabardian lords, defining very exactly their rights and obligations toward the princes and toward the people." Four princely families ruled over Kabardia at the time of the Russian-Caucasian wars.[113]

This long list of Kabardian ranks may be summed up as follows:[114]

(1) The Princes,[115] also called *Bey*[116]

(2) The Nobility

(a) of the first order: *tlekotlesh*, i. e., "The Strong Generation"[117] or "*Uzden* of the First Class."[118]

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[110] E. Eichwald, *Reise auf dem Caspischen Meere und in den Kaukasus*, Vol. I, Part. II, p. 324.

[111] Pallas, *Bemerkungen auf einer Reise in die süd. Stth. d. russ. Reichs, etc.*, I, p. 369.
Ladyženskij, FT, p. 188.
Leontovič, I, pp. 116, 223 f.
Dubrovin, *Istorija*, I, pp. 192—216.

[112] Ladyženskij, "Zur Erforschung der Rechtsgewohnheiten der Bergvölker des Kaukasus," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, XLII (1930), p. 242. Ladyženskij, "Entstehung und Entwicklung des Staates bei den kaukasischen Bergvölker," *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie*, VII (1931), pp. 46 f.

[113] Essad-Bey, *Der Kaukasus, seine Berge, Völker und Geschichte*, p. 189, from whom the quotaiton is also taken.

[114] A. Ladyženskij, "Entstehung und Entwicklung des Staates bei den kaukasischen Bergvölkern," *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie*, VII (1931), pp. 38—49.
Maslovskij, "Privillegirovannyja sostovija kabardinskago okruga," SSKG, III (1870), pp. 1—13 (This is the product of a special committe for collecting native laws in the Terek Territory, under the direction of Maslovskij.).
Leontovič, II, pp. 237—245, for the rights of the different classes. See also Leontovič, I, pp. 116, 223 f.
Ladyženskij, FT, p. 181.
Dirr, AGKB, p. 35, *note* 43.
Reineggs, *Allgemeine historisch-topographische Beschreibung des Kaukasus*, I, p. 249.
Klaproth, "Voyage au Mont Caucase," *Nouvelle Bibliotheque*, XI, p. 172.

[115] Maslovskij, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
Ladyženskij, "Entstehung und Entwicklung des Staates bei den kaukasischen Bergvölkern," *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Soziologie*, VII (1931), p. 38.

[116] Reineggs, *l. c.*

[117] Ladyženskij, FT, p. 181. J. Castagné, "Le droit coutumier familial des montagnards du Caucase," *Révue des études islamiques*, 1929, No. 2, p. 249.

[118] The word "uzden" is of Tartaric derivation (Klaproth, *l. c.*).